



CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT

17 MARCH 2021

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) Los Angeles – Palm Desert Man Who Firebombed Republican HQ Pleads Guilty in Federal Court

(U) A 23-year-old Palm Desert man who tossed a Molotov cocktail into a Republican group's office in Coachella Valley entered a guilty plea on Monday and faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison. Carlos Espriu, who firebombed the East Valley Republican Women Federated office last May, appeared via video conference in US District Court in Los Angeles before US District Judge Percy Anderson and pleaded guilty to one count of attempted arson of a building used in interstate and foreign commerce.

SOURCE: 16 March 2021, [NPR](#)

(U) Ontario – Two Dead After Fireworks Explosion

(U) Two people were killed in a fireworks explosion that rocked an Ontario, California, neighborhood yesterday afternoon. Crews were battling a fire sparked by "a large battery of fireworks," including some that appeared to be "commercial grade" and the type you would see at "fireworks shows," Chief Ray Gayk of the Ontario Fire Department said. Investigators with the department's bomb squad, FBI and ATF were still going through the area to make sure no explosives were left about three hours after firefighters responded.

SOURCE: 16 March 2021, [NBC News](#)

(U) NATIONAL

(U) Atlanta – Eight Killed In Metro Atlanta Spa Shooting Spree; Suspect Arrested in South Georgia

(U) Georgia – A 21-year-old man from Woodstock, who was arrested in South Georgia on Tuesday night, is the suspect in three metro Atlanta massage parlor shootings that left eight people dead, authorities said. Robert Aaron Long was first identified as the suspect in the shooting at Young's Asian Massage Parlor in Cherokee County that left four people dead and one person injured, according to the sheriff's office. He is also a suspect in two more shootings at similar businesses in northeast Atlanta that resulted in four more deaths, according to a sheriff's office spokesman. Six of the eight victims were Asian women, authorities said.

SOURCE: 17 March 2021, [Atlanta Journal Constitution](#)

(U) Michigan – Man Charged with Threatening to Kill Biden, Pelosi and Whitmer

(U) Holland – Michigan state prosecutors have charged a 21-year-old man with threatening to kill President Joe Biden, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, saying he claimed to "be the catalyst" for an American revolution, officials said yesterday. Whitmer previously had been the target of right-wing militia extremists who plotted to kidnap her ahead of last November's election, according to US prosecutors. The new and separate charges come as US law enforcement officials including FBI Director Christopher Wray have warned of the growing threat of homegrown violent extremism in the United States.

SOURCE: 17 March 2021, [Reuters](#)

(U) North Carolina – Man Faces Terrorism Charges for Allegedly Planting Explosive Devices

(U) Brevard – A North Carolina man was arrested yesterday after he allegedly planted explosive devices at a church, community college, and a veteran's organization over the weekend. Terry Lee Barham, 64, faces several charges, including possession of a weapon of mass destruction and three terrorism counts. Police were called to the First Baptist Church on Sunday morning in Brevard where they found an incendiary device that had not yet been detonated. After searching the area, they found more devices at the Transylvania County Community Services Building, as well as the American Legion Lodge. These devices had been "detonated with superficial damage," according to authorities.

SOURCE: 16 March 2021, [Fox News](#)

(U) Pennsylvania – Man Charged with Obstruction of Justice Relating to Attempts to Acquire Ricin

(U) Allentown – A Pennsylvania man was charged yesterday with obstructing an investigation into his efforts to acquire the deadly toxin, ricin. Dr. Ishtiaq Ali Saaem, 37, of Allentown, Penn., was charged with one count of obstruction of justice. According to the charging document, Saaem worked as the director of advanced research at a biotechnology firm based in Massachusetts. Saaem ordered 100 packets of castor beans, each containing eight seeds, online. Saaem falsely told law enforcement agents that he purchased castor beans for planting at his apartment for decoration and that he had accidentally purchased 100 packets instead of one.

SOURCE: 16 March 2021, [Department of Justice](#)

(U) West Virginia – Man Sold Devices to Followers of Far-Right Extremist ‘Boogaloo’ Movement

(U) Charleston – A West Virginia man has pleaded guilty to a weapons charge after he was accused of selling machine gun conversion devices online to followers of a far-right extremist movement. Timothy John Watson entered the plea yesterday to possession of an unregistered firearm silencer in federal court in Martinsburg. Several other charges were dropped under a plea agreement. Watson, 30, of Ranson, faces up to 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Prosecutors said they will seek a stiffer sentence due to the seriousness of Watson's alleged conduct.

SOURCE: 16 March 2021, [CBS Pittsburgh](#)

(U) INTERNATIONAL

(U) Mali – Militants Kill 11 Malian Soldiers in Ambush, 11 Others Missing

(U) Gao – 11 Malian soldiers were killed and 11 more are missing after Islamist militants ambushed a patrol in the desert north, the army said yesterday. 14 soldiers were also wounded, eight of them seriously, in the attack in the northern region of Gao on Monday, the army said in a statement. It added that seven militants were killed in an ensuing exchange of fire. Islamist militants, who seized Mali's desert north in 2012 before being pushed back by French-led forces the following year, have stepped up attacks in the north and center in recent years

SOURCE: 16 March 2021, [Reuters](#)

(U) Niger – Gunmen Kill at Least 58 Civilians in Attack on Convoy

(U) Tillabery – Armed men in southwestern Niger have killed at least 58 people when they intercepted a convoy returning from a weekly market and attacked a nearby village, the government said yesterday. The attacks on Monday occurred in the Tillabery region, which is near the border with Mali and Burkina Faso and has seen increasingly deadly attacks by armed groups active across the region with links to ISIL (ISIS) and al-Qa'ida. The announcement was read on Niger state television by government spokesman Abdourahmane Zakaria, who declared three days of national mourning for the victims.

SOURCE: 16 March 2021, [Reuters](#)

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